

Emotions:

*An inner reaction to circumstances
in one's life*



We have all experienced emotions; both the positive and the negative side of emotions. They are a part of life and how we are created. Our God also experiences emotions; we see that fact throughout Scripture. But defining emotions is difficult; there are so *many* different definitions. To confuse things further, emotions and feelings are often used interchangeably. Emotions are the natural inner reaction to circumstances and feelings, while influenced by emotions, are influenced by a host of other stimuli in our lives.

Emotions; the inner reaction to circumstance in one's life, too often can drive us to react to life's circumstances in negative ways. Emotions are something that occur within us, we don't control the feeling of emotions, but we can, and are told in Scripture to, control our expression of those emotions. Self-control is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and we are admonished to exhibit self control in our lives, including the expression of our emotions. Romans 12 and 1 Thessalonians 4 tell us to transform our minds and not to be controlled by passionate lust as seen in the pagans who don't know God. Emotions are incredibly complex and can be a powerful influence in our lives. We must trust in the Lord, our God and focus on Him through emotional experiences.

Emotions profoundly affect our marriage. Marriage brings together two profoundly different people and couples tend to be very different emotionally. My childhood upbringing taught me not to express emotions; to suppress them and I learned to not even acknowledge them. Carmen grew up very differently and for many years would think I was lying when I said I didn't know what emotions I felt. As I've become more emotionally aware, I have been able to grow emotionally *and* we have grown closer together. It is important to express emotions to our spouse, but that expression needs to be done with healthy communication.

Emotions are an indication of where we are at in life; as one writer stated; they are a gauge, but should not be our guide in life. God's truth must be our guide. I may experience the emotion of sadness that leads to a feeling of not measuring up or feeling depressed. I must rely on God's truths that I am His child and that I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I confess that for me, being emotionally aware and then expressing them in healthy ways is still difficult for me. It is not natural for me, but as I continue to work at it, I will grow as an individual and in marriage relationship. Will you do the same? Seek to express your emotions to your spouse in healthy ways that will build up your relationship.

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Articles to check out:

What does Scripture Say about Emotions & Feelings by Billy W. - biblebrodown.com

How Emotions Cause Conflict in Marriage by Derek and Missy Irvin - www.hopefultomorrow.com

How to Control Your Emotions in a Relationship by Sylvia Smith - www.marriage.com